

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TOKYO 10674 01 OF 02 130238Z  
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
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R 130223Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8740  
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
USLO PEKING  
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 10674

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: PINT, JA  
SUBJECT: THREE POLITICIANS VIEW FUTURE

SUMMARY: THREE PROMINENT JAPANESE POLITICIANS PRESENTED SHARPLY DIVERGENT VIEWS OF JAPANESE DOMESTIC POLITICS FIVE YEARS HENCE TO DEPARTING EMBOFF. FORMER SOCIALIST SECRETARY GENERAL ISHIBASHI FEARS REVIVED MILITARISM AND AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT. CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY ABE SEES THE CONSERVATIVES RULING ALONE, SLIGHTLY STRENGTHENED IN BOTH DIET HOUSES. NLC CHAIRMAN YOHEI KONO BELIEVES COALITION IS IN STORE. THESE VIEWS REFLECT POLITICAL TRANSITION NOW UNDERWAY. ALTHOUGH FINAL OUTCOME REMAINS UNCLEAR, ONE CAN BE REASONABLY SURE PROCESS WILL BE GRADUAL. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING DEPARTING EMBOFF'S FAREWELL CALLS, THREE PROMINENT JAPANESE POLITICIANS EXPRESSED VIEWS OF MORE THAN CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 10674 01 OF 02 130238Z

ROUTINE INTEREST. FORMER SOCIALIST SECRETARY-GENERAL MASASHI ISHIBASHI, SPEAKING WITH HIS CUSTOMARY FRANKNESS, FORCEFULLY EXPRESSED VIEW THAT WITHIN FIVE YEARS JAPANESE CONSTITUTION, I.E., WAR-RENOUNCING ARTICLE NINE, WOULD BE REVISED AND RAPID EXPANSION OF THE SELF-DEFENSE FORCES AND ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY WOULD IMMEDIATELY ENSUE. ISHIBASHI SAID MOST LIKELY WAY FOR THIS TO COME ABOUT WOULD BE FOR

EXTERNAL EVENTS PERCEIVED AS THREATENING AND INTERNAL PRESSURES TO COMBINE TO PRODUCE REVISION. ANOTHER LESS LIKELY BUT PLAUSIBLE POSSIBILITY WAS U.S. PRESSURE FOR JAPAN TO BE A FULL ALLIANCE PARTNER, WILLING AND ABLE TO DEFEND AMERICA MILITARILY, AS WELL AS BE DEFENDED.

ISHIBASHI ALSO WONDERED ALOUD ABOUT THE SHALLOWNESS OF JAPAN'S DEMOCRATIC ROOTS, ASSERTING THAT REVIVAL OF MILITARISM AND AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT WAS NOT AT ALL IMPOSSIBLE.

2. ISHIBASHI, WHO MAY WELL BECOME JSP CHAIRMAN DURING THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, SAID HE AND THE JSP WOULD LEAD FIGHT AGAINST THIS TREND, BUT THEY WERE ALREADY SUBJECT TO VERBAL RIDICULE FROM ALMOST OTHER PARTIES AS BEING HOPELESSLY NAIVE OR WORSE. THEIR STANCE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY COST THEM ELECTION SUPPORT AS WELL, BUT THEY WOULD PERSIST.

3. ISHIBASHI FOCUSED EXTENSIVELY ON SINO-U.S. RELATIONS, THRUST OF HIS REMARKS SEEMING TO BE THAT IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP MIGHT NOT BE TO JAPAN'S ADVANTAGE -- AND CERTAINLY WOULD NOT BE TO SOVIET ADVANTAGE. ISHIBASHI SAID HE AWAITED WITH GREAT INTEREST WHAT CHINESE WOULD DO ABOUT SINO-SOVIET PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY BY 1980, WHEN, UNLESS ABROGATED, IT WOULD BE CONTINUED FOR ANOTHER FIVE YEARS. ISHIBASHI SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH HE FAVORED THE SINO-JAPANESE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY, HEGEMONY ISSUE WOULD

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TOKYO 10674 01 OF 02 130238Z

HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT CAREFULLY.

4. CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SHINTARO ABE, SOMEWHAT MORE CAREFUL THAN USUAL IN HIS FORMAL SETTING AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S RESIDENCE, SAW LDP STILL IN SOLE CONTROL OF DIET FIVE YEARS HENCE, "PROBABLY SLIGHTLY STRONGER THAN NOW." HE THOUGHT CENTRIST PARTIES WOULD REMAIN AT ABOUT THEIR PRESENT STRENGTH, AND SOCIALISTS WOULD DECLINE, WHILE JCP WOULD INCREASE SLIGHTLY. ABE SAID REASON FOR OPTIMISM ABOUT LDP ELECTION PROSPECTS WAS THAT CONSERVATIVES WOULD RECOUP LOWER HOUSE SEATS LOST IN 1976 DUE TO LOCKHEED. MOREOVER, BY 1980 UPPER HOUSE ELECTION, CONSERVATIVES AND SOCIALISTS WOULD HAMMER OUT ADVANTAGEOUS REFORM OF UPPER HOUSE ELECTION SYSTEM OVER CENTRISTS' PROTESTS.

5. AS FOR POLICY DIRECTIONS, ABE INDICATED LDP LEADERSHIP WAS PREOCCUPIED WITH CURRENT UNFINISHED BUSINESS, I.E., PASSAGE OF JAPAN-ROK CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION AND MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY NEGOTIATION OF SINO-JAPANESE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY, AND WAS NOT GIVING MUCH ATTENTION TO LONG-TERM FUTURE. ABE TOOK IT AS CERTAIN THAT OHIRA WOULD SUCCEED FUKUDA, BUT AFTER THAT

HE SAID SITUATION WAS COMPLETELY FLUID. HE FOUND JAPAN'S PRESENT HEIGHTENED SECURITY AWARENESS TO BE ONLY "NATURAL."

6. NLC CHAIRMAN YOHEI KONO ASSERTED THAT LDP WOULD LOSE ITS DIET MAJORITIES BY 1983. KONO NOTED SOMEWHAT SHEEPISHLY THAT HE HAD EARLIER PREDICTED MAJORITY LOSSES BY 1980. NONETHELESS, BY 1983 TWO ADDITIONAL UPPER HOUSE AND LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS WOULD HAVE TAKEN PLACE, AND HE FELT REASONABLY CERTAIN LDP MAJORITIES WOULD BE LOST, MAKING COALITION NECESSARY.

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 02 OF 02 TOKYO 10674

7. KONO SAID IT WAS STILL TOO EARLY TO SAY ANYTHING MEANINGFUL ABOUT WHICH PARTY OR PARTIES MIGHT SERVE AS LDP COALITION PARTNERS AT THAT TIME. WHEN ASKED WHAT CONDITIONS THAT NLC MIGHT IMPOSE BEFORE JOINING COALITION, KONO SAID HE HAD RECENTLY DISCUSSED THIS PROBLEM AT LENGTH WITH UK LIBERAL PARTY CHAIRMAN THORPE. HE INTENDED TO PURSUE THAT CONVERSATION AND PERHAPS LOOK INTO THE SPD/FDP RELATIONSHIP IN WEST GERMANY. THESE MODELS WOULD NOT FIT UNIQUE JAPANESE CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER. RATHER THAN ECONOMIC OR SECURITY THEMES, KONO SAID HIS PARTY WOULD URGE EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENT IN DISCUSSING COALITION POSSIBILITIES. WITH HIS USUAL CANDOR, KONO EXPECTED HIS OWN PARTY WOULD REMAIN AT ABOUT THE SAME STRENGTH THROUGH THIS PERIOD.

8. KONO DID NOT EXPECT THE CONSTITUTION TO BE REVISED.  
THERE WAS NO NEED TO DO SO; PUBLIC OPINION HAD SHIFTED TO  
POINT WHERE JAPAN COULD DO ALL IT NEEDED TO DO WITHIN  
PRESENT LEGAL FRAMEWORK.

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 10674 02 OF 02 130238Z

9. COMMENT: AS IS NORMAL, THESE CONVERSATIONS WERE (WITH  
PARTIAL EXCEPTION OF ISHIBASHI) VERY JAPAN-CENTERED.  
VIEWPOINTS ARE UNUSUALLY DISPARATE FOR TOP JAPANESE  
POLITICIANS, HOWEVER, REFLECTING PRESENT TRANSITIONAL  
PERIOD WITH ITS UNCERTAIN FUTURE PROSPECTS. WHILE  
DIFFERING AS TO EXACT SHAPE OF FUTURE, ALL THREE MEN  
DID AGREE, AT LEAST BY IMPLICATION, THAT PROCESS OF  
CHANGE WOULD, AS IS NORMALLY CASE IN JAPAN, BE GRADUAL  
AND INCREMENTAL. MANSFIELD

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## Message Attributes

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Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014